

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-10

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-10 NSCE-00 PM-03 CIAE-00

INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 L-02 PRS-01 SPC-01 SAJ-01

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FM USMISSION NATO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1904

SECDEF WASHDC

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

USCINCEUR

USNMR SHAPE

CINCUSAFE

USLOAFCENT

C O N F I D E N T I A L USNATO 4685

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, NATO, MCAP

SUBJ: POSSIBLE REMOVAL OF AFCENT HEADQUARTERS FROM THE NETHERLANDS

REF: (A) USNATO 4544 (NOTAL), (B) THE HAGUE 4295

BEGIN SUMMARY: AT LUNCH OCTOBER 2, BELGIAN AND ITALIAN PERMREPS
CRITICIZED NATO MILITARY AUTHORITIES FOR UNDERTAKING STUDY IN-
VOLVING POSSIBLE REMOVAL OF AFCENT FROM NETHERLANDS WITHOUT AD-
VISING NATO POLITICAL AUTHORITIES. SYG LUNS SAID MC CHAIRMAN HAD
BEEN UNAWARE OF STUDY, AND HE HAD ADVISED SACEUR THAT THIS WAS A
POLITICAL QUESTION. END SUMMARY.

1. AT PERMREPS LUNCH OCTOBER 2, NETHERLANDS REP BUWALDA REFERRED
TO PRESS LEAK (REF B) ABOUT POSSIBLE REMOVAL OF AFCENT FROM BRUNS-
SUM. THE GON HAD SAID IN REPLY TO QUESTIONS THAT THERE WAS
SUCH A STUDY, BUT THAT THE STUDY WAS NOT DUE FOR COMPLETION
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UNTIL NEXT YEAR, AND THAT IT WOULD INCLUDE THE POLITICAL
AND ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS INVOLVED. THE GON HAD SAID IT DID
NOT A PRIORI REJECT THE IDEA OF A CHANGE FROM BRUNSSUM, BUT THAT
THEY WILL REQUIRE THAT THE POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS

BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT. BUWALDA SAID THIS MEANS, IN THEIR MIND, THAT THERE CAN BE NO DECISION ON THIS MATTER AT THE DECEMBER MINISTERIAL MEETING.

2. SYG LUNS SAID MC CHAIRMAN STEINHOFF HAD TOLD HIM HE KNEW NOTHING ABOUT THIS STUDY. STEINHOFF TOLD LUNS THAT HE AGREED THAT THIS WAS A POLITICAL MATTER AND NOT A MILITARY QUESTION. LUNS SAID HE HAD RECEIVED ASSURANCES THAT THIS IS A MATTER THAT WILL NOT BE REQUIRING A DECISION, THE IMPLICATION BEING THAT IT HAS BEEN OR IS BEING KILLED.

3. BELGIAN PERMREP DE STAERCKE THEN SAID THAT THIS WAS A TERRIBLE SITUATION. IT WAS USELESS TO PUT INTO QUESTION AGREEMENTS THAT DATE BACK TO PARIS IN 1967 AND WERE PART OF THE COMPROMISE, AND STEINHOFF AGREED FULLY. DE STAERCKE SAID IT WAS OUTRAGEOUS THAT MILITARY WOULD BE MAKING THIS STUDY. THE 1967 AGREEMENTS WERE A COMPROMISE. BELGIUM, IN ORDER TO TAKE NATO, REQUIRED THAT ANOTHER SMALL COUNTRY TAKE SOMETHING, AND THE NETHERLANDS AGREED TO DO SO.

4. I SAID THAT IT STRUCK ME THAT IT WAS NOT UNUSUAL FOR THE MILITARY TO STUDY MILITARY QUESTIONS SUCH AS THIS 2-ATAF, 4-ATAF MATTER. MY RECOLLECTION WAS THAT SECRETARY LAIRD HAD RAISED THE MATTER OF COMBINING THESE HEADQUARTERS SOME TIME AGO, AND IT REALLY SHOULDN'T COME AS ANY GREAT SURPRISE.

5. DE STAERCKE SAID THE "WE CAN BE SO WRONG IN BEING SO RIGHT." HE AND ITALIAN PERMREP CATALANO SAID THAT IT WAS TERRIBLE THAT THIS HAD HAPPENED. THE MILITARY SHOULD NEVER HAVE UNDERTAKEN THIS STUDY, AND THAT THEY SHOULD HAVE TOLD THE POLITICAL AUTHORITIES BEFORE THEY EVEN BEGAN IT. LUNS REPEATED THAT STEINHOFF HAD SAID HE DIDN'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THE EXISTENCE OF THE STUDY. RUMSFELD

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